



Narrative review: Tetanus-a health threat after natural disasters in developing countries

Author(s): Afshar M, Raju M, Ansell D, Bleck TP
Year: 2011
Journal: Annals of Internal Medicine. 154 (5): 329-335

Abstract:

Tetanus is an expected complication when disasters strike in developing countries, where tetanus immunization coverage is often low or nonexistent. Collapsing structures and swirling debris inflict numerous crush injuries, fractures, and serious wounds. *Clostridium tetani* infects wounds contaminated with dirt, feces, or saliva and releases neurotoxins that may cause fatal disease. Clusters of infections have recently occurred after tsunamis and earthquakes in Indonesia, Kashmir, and Haiti. The emergency response to clusters of tetanus infections in developing countries after a natural disaster requires a multidisciplinary approach in the absence of an intensive care unit, readily available resources, and a functioning cold-chain system. It is essential that injured people receive immediate surgical and medical care of contaminated, open wounds with immunization and immunoglobulin therapy. Successful treatment of tetanus depends on prompt diagnosis of clinical tetanus, treatment to ensure neutralization of circulating toxin and elimination of *C. tetani* infection, control of spasms and convulsions, maintenance of the airway, and management of respiratory failure and autonomic dysfunction.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21357910>

Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Other Exposure

Other Exposure: Natural disasters

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease (other): Tetanus

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Low Socioeconomic Status, Pregnant Women

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:



resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content